

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR SAXBE'S OPENING TALKS: CREDENTIALS  
STATEMENT  
FOR SAXBE FROM ATHERTON

1. WELCOME TO DELHI. FROM WASHINGTON VIEWPOINT, INDIAN REACTION TO FEBRUARY 24 LIFTING OF ARMS EMBARGO HAS BEEN ABOUT WHAT WE ANTICIPATED. WE OBVIOUSLY HAD NOT EXPECTED INDIANS WOULD STAND UP AND CHEER, BUT EXCEPT FOR AMBASSADOR KAUL'S INTEMPERATE AND UNACCEPTABLE OUTBURST INDIAN OFFICIAL REACTION HAS BEEN WITHIN BOUNDS OF WHAT WE JUDGE TO BE REASONABLE CONSIDERING HISTORY OF ARMS ISSUE.

2. IN OUR VIEW, INDIAN RESPONSE PRESERVES BASIS FOR CONTINUED EFFORT WITH GOI TOWARD DEVELOPING STABLE AND HOPEFULLY COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP. SECRETARY'S FEBRUARY 28 LETTER TO CHAVAN MADE CLEAR THAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN CONTINUING THIS PROCESS AND LOOK FORWARD TO RESCHEDULING

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CHAVAN'S VISIT AND MEETING OF JOINT COMMISSION AS SOON AS

INDIANS FEEL A0LETOPROCEED AND MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY DATES CAN BE AGREED UPON. AS SEPARATE TELEGRAM INDICATES, WE AGREE WITH EMBASSY RECOMMENDATIONS THAT VARIOUS JOINT COMMISSION EFFORTS SHOULD MOVE AHEAD TO EXTENT INDIANS FEEL THIS IS POSSIBLE. IN NUMBER OF AREAS SUBCOMMISSIONS HAVE

MADE EXCELLENT START AND WE WOULD NOT WANT TO LOSE MOMENTUM AS RESULT OF POSTPONEMENT BY CHAVAN.

3. AS YOU MAKE YOUR OPENING ROUND OF CALLS WITH INDIAN LEADERS, I BELIEVE THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POINTS YOU CAN USEFULLY STRESS IN OUTLINING OUR CURRENT APPROACH TO INDIA:

A. OUR OVERALL POLICY TOWARD INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA REMAINS EXACTLY AS SECRETARY STATED IN INDIA. WE REGARD INDIA AS A MAJOR COUNTRY AND PRINCIPAL POWER IN SOUTH ASIA. WE DO NOT INTEND TO UPSET THE PRESENT REGIONAL STRATEGIC BALANCE OR TO FUEL AN ARMS RACE. WE REGARD INDIA-PAKISTAN RECONCILIATION AS FUNDAMENTAL TO PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE SUBCONTINENT WHICH REMAINS THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF OUR SOUTH ASIA POLICY.

B. FOR TOO MANY YEARS, ARMS POLICY QUESTION HAS BEEN OVERRIDING ISSUE BETWEEN US. WE TRUST THAT WE HAVE DEVELOPED OR CAN DEVELOP SUFFICIENTLY BROAD-BASED FRAMEWORK SO THAT THIS QUESTION CAN NOW BE KEPT IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE.

C. WE DID NOT EXPECT THAT INDIANS WOULD LIKE U.S. ACTION ON ARMS POLICY, BUT WE WERE FULLY AWARE OF INDIAN VIEWS AND TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE TOOK THESE INTO ACCOUNT IN FORMULATION OF NEW POLICY AND WILL DO SO IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION.

D. WE ASK THAT INDIANS NOT JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS, BUT ADOPT A WAIT-AND-SEE ATTITUDE ON OUR NEW POLICY. WE JUDGE THIS WILL NOT PROVE INIMICAL TO SUBCONTINENT STABILITY OR INDIAN SECURITY INTERESTS AND HOPE IN TIME GOI WILL COME TO SHARE THIS VIEW.

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E. WE CONSIDER THAT OFFICIAL INDIAN RESPONSE TO LIFTING THE EMBARGO (AS OPPOSED TO LINE TAKEN BY KAUL) PROVIDES BASIS ON WHICH WE CAN JOINTLY CONTINUE EFFORT TO WORK TOWARD DEVELOPING NEW INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP. U.S. INTENDS TO WORK SERIOUSLY TO THIS END AND HOPES INDIANS WILL ALSO.

F. AS SECRETARY HAS WRITTEN CHAVAN, WE HOPE THAT HIS VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND FIRST MEETING OF JOINT COMMISSION CAN BE RESCHEDULED AT A MUTUALLY CONVENIENT TIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WE THINK THE SUBCOMMISSIONS HAVE GOTTEN OFF TO GOOD START AND INTEND FOR OUR PART TO CONTINUE THE SOLID WORK THEY HAVE BEGUN.

G. IF ECONOMIC ISSUES COME UP, YOU CAN SAY:

A. THAT WE ARE HOPEFUL CURRENT PL 480 NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE COMPLETED QUICKLY.

B. THAT OUR LONG-STANDING OFFER TO DISCUSS BILATERAL ASSISTANCE REMAINS ON TABLE.

C. ON DEBT RELIEF, AS INDIANS KNOW, WE HAVE GENUINE CONGRESSIONAL PROBLEMS BUT ARE CONTINUING TO EXAMINE ISSUE.

4. WE CONCUR IN YOUR PROPOSED CREDENTIALS STATEMENT (DELHI 3016). THIS CLEARLY ARTICULATES THE SORT OF BALANCED APPROACH WHICH WE HOPE WILL CHARACTERIZE OUR RELATIONS WITH INDIA IN THE PERIOD AHEAD. GOOD LUCK. KISSINGER

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